

2 August 1955

7-2874

MEMORANDUM FOR THE DIRECTOR:

Mr. Othman's claim of neutrality as to where CIA erects its building must be taken as his honest statement -- but in all friendliness we should recall that Othman lives in McLean, proclaims friendship for Sam Neel, works with Tony Lewis; and incidentally, the NEWS -- like all Washington papers -- wants the building in the District where its main advertisers have places of business.

Why shouldn't CIA surplus property be publicly listed and advertised to bidders as such, like any other surplus Government property? This is the subject Othman wants to discuss "on the record." I think his request a proper one and recommend the Director grant it.

CIA is a secret security organization. The way to retain secrecy is to be silent. The Acts of 1947 and 1949 place definite responsibilities upon the Director to see that methods of operation, numbers of employees, pay, titles, et cetera, are not made public. Were CIA to publish items it buys, as CIA bid and sold supplies, etc., it certainly would be giving foreign intelligence agencies -- potential enemies -- inklings as to what it is doing, why it buys these items, how many people and what type (scientists, analysts) are to use them; and these non-secret every-day use items -- atlases, maps of Africa, etc., for example -- have intelligence implications that might be used against CIA, using this little item, that little item, to build up a pattern or a picture. What intelligence agency does that any place in the world? When we have a "surplus" why should CIA be associated with it? GSA sells surplus property for the value of the property, not because it is Army, Navy, or CIA property. It is GSA property and even the Press adds nothing to its news story by saying it is CIA rather than GSA. The secrecy again is peculiar to an intelligence agency that has potential enemies studying any and all data it can get re CIA.

Othman's reference to \$2 tobacco is a funny man, paid to be funny, doing a slight snide comment to appeal to the mass of 35-cent tobacco smokers.

Recommend DCI see him wholly "on the record" and convert him.

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STANLEY J. ORRMAN

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